Host

Dangerously Yours!

Dangerously Yours. A half hour of romance and adventure, brought to you at this time each Sunday by the Vick Chemical Company. And today, bringing you a special short version of Masquerade, an exciting tale of espionage in the Budapest of 1915.

Narrator

I am adventure. In my name, men have traversed the highways, the byways, the skyways of the world. I have tramped the jungles with explorers. I have ridden the wilderness road on horseback and in covered wagons. I have gone 20,000 leagues under the seas, and as many leagues above them. I have been the fire of Captain Kidd and Walter Raleigh and John Paul Jones and Francois Villon. That fire that burns in the heart of youth, that makes men dream and dare and conquer.

I am the spirit of romantic adventure. I am dangerously yours. Today, follow me to a dark room in the Europe of 25 years ago, where a woman sits looking across a desk into eyes that are focused on history.

Masquerade!

Excellency/Mr Kolenkoff

And so, my Countess Rishola, you have our reasons for choosing you for this mission. You are very young, you are clever, and you are very beautiful. Because of your youth, you should be exceptionally valuable to us.

Katherine/Countess Rishola

I am at your command, Excellency.

Excellency/Mr Kolenkoff

And you'll forget my title. In all our communications you will address me as Mr. Kolenkoff. Now let us get on to fix. I hope the Count will not be too difficult for you, he`s a short man. When you have obtained our information you will conceal the message in this silver pencil. Send it to me immediately. Trust no one. We rely on your discretion.

Katherine

I understand.

Mr Kolenkoff

Very well. Now, in these papers you will find all the necessary information about Count EEstefan. It has already been arranged just how you will meet him. Tonight you will take the train to Budapest.

...

Unknown Man #1

Good evening, madame.!

Katherine

Have my bag sent to suite 913.

Unknown Man #1

Yes, madame.

...

Unknown Man #2

Good evening, Countess Rishola.

Katherine

Good evening.

Waiter

Welcome back, Countess Rishola.

Katherine

Thank you, Baudry.

Waiter

Our table for one, madame?

Katherine

Is Count Estefan dining?

Waiter

Oh, he's at the table by the window, madame.

Unknown woman #1

My dear, I can't imagine whatever possessed to wear that hair.

Unknown man #3

I told Benson my price was $5,000.

Count Estefan

This morning when I was riding in the park, I saw Duffy on the bridal path. He was... I beg your pardon, madame.

Katherine

Here is the necklace and the rings and the bracelet you gave me, Luigi. Take them back. I'm through.

Count Estefan

Just a moment, madame. You've made a... ¡Madame, wait!

Bellhop

¿Can I be of service, Count Estefan?

Count Estefan

Did you see the young lady who stopped at my table?

Bellhop

Yes.

Count Estefan

She left these jewels. I don't understand. ¿Do you know who she is?

Bellhop

She is the Countess Rishola. She's in suite 913.

Katherine

Just a moment.

Count Estefan

Madame, you have made a mistake. My name is not Luigi. I have never seen you or these jewels before.

Katherine

I know. Won't you come in, Count Estefan?

Count Estefan

You...You know who I am?

Katherine

But of course. You were the most handsome man in the dining room. And I was very lonely. So I thought tonight I will have an adventure. I will make the acquaintance of the distinguished Count Estefan.

Count Estefan

How do you know my name?

Katherine

It was not difficult to find out.

Count Estefan

How did you know I wouldn't run off with your jewels?

Katherine

I took that chance. Besides, they're insured. * laughs* Are you angry?

Count Estefan

* Laughs * No, I am not angry. If some kind fate wishes to send a beautiful lady to dine with me, I can only be grateful. You will do me the honor, won't you, madame?

Katherine

I shall be delighted.

...

Count Estefan

What would you like for dinner?

Katherine

What does a count eat? Pheasants wings and peacock's breast, and? * laughs * I mean, what do you usually eat?

Count Estefan

What does a countess usually eat?

Katherine

Almost anything.

Count Estefan

Well, then, how about roast beef?

Katherine

* All right. *

...

Amusement park employee

Step right up, Monsieur Dunn, and watch Mademoiselle in the red hat shoot the little clay pigeon. ¡Step right up!

Katherine

I'll never be able to hit a thing.

Count Estefan

Don't let me down before all these people.

Katherine

I'll try.

...

Katherine

Good heavens!

Amusement park employee

Hand the little lady down a dancing doll.

...

Count Estefan

Look, Katherine, a shooting star. Did you wish?

Katherine

I didn't have time.

Count Estefan

And there is something you wish for?

Katherine

Yes.

Count Estefan

What did you wish?

Katherine

I was wishing that we were two other people. Two people who need not say goodbye.

Count Estefan

Perhaps it can be that way.

...

Count Estefan's assistant/Albert

Forgive me, Your Lordship, but I'm not easy in my mind about this business. I wish you wouldn't go to see that woman tonight, sir.

Count Estefan

How could I stay away? Albert, for the first time in my life, I'm completely, head over heels in love.

Albert

But, Count Estefan...

Count Estefan

I know what you're thinking. I have a mission to perform and I have no right to fall in love. But things don't always work out the way we'd like to have them work out, eh, Albert?

Albert

Oh, I don't know what's the come of all this, sir.

Count Estefan

No, Albert, neither do I. Neither do I. But perhaps we shall find out tonight.

...

Katherine's maid

Katherine, I have received a message for you from Mr. Kolenkoff.

Katherine

What is it?

Katherine´s maid

He said that you must obtain our information immediately. That you've taken too long. You are to get it tonight.

Katherine

Tonight?

Katherine´s maid

Mr. Kolenkoff has been lenient with you because this is your first mission. But he will not be lenient any longer. It is not wise to anger Mr. Kolenkoff. He is a dangerous enemy. Forgive me, Catherine. I was sent to serve you as a maid, not to give you advice.

Katherine

You're right. Don't worry. The mission will be completed tonight.

Katherine´s maid

You have the silver pencil?

Katherine

Yes.

Katherine´s maid

Then I will wait for you at the appointed place. Do not fail us. The mission will be completed tonight.

...

Count Estefan

Katherine, I offer you the three things most dear to me. My heart, my country, and my dream.

Katherine

You are too generous.

Count Estefan

Katherine, you must listen to me. Since that first hour we met, I've been completely yours. There's never been anyone else for me. There never will.

Katherine

Oh, please, please, don't say any more. There are worlds between us, worlds that can't be bridged with words.

Count Estefan

You said one night that you wished we were two different people. I think you may have that wish, Katherine.

Katherine

What do you mean?

Count Estefan

Only that my country is close to its victory and may not need so much of my service any longer.

Katherine

Close to victory?

Count Estefan

I'm going to tell you something tonight, Katherine. Something that will put my life in your hands.

Katherine

Your life?

Count Estefan

It would mean my life, were the news to get to certain circles, yes.

Katherine

Then don't tell me. How do you know you can trust me?

Count Estefan

I love you. And I believe you love me.

Katherine

You're quite wrong. This has been only an adventure to me.

Count Estefan

That isn't true, Katherine.

Katherine

It is true. You smiled at me, I was flattered. It was an adventure for a holiday mood.

Count Estefan

You may as well take my heart, Katherine. It's already full of you. You walked into it the day we met.

Katherine

You're a fool, Rudolph Estefan.

Rudolph

¿Oh, but isn't any man who falls in love? ¿Do you know what you are to me? You're something to believe in again. You're a type of person that had ceased to exist for me. A fine and honest woman.

Katherine

Oh, my darling, you're such a child. Take your foolish little dream and your heart and go. Please go.

Rudolph

What is it? What's wrong, my dear?

Katherine

You know nothing about me. You've known me only three weeks.

Rudolph

Three weeks? Katherine, I've known you all my life.

Katherine

¿All your life!

Rudolph

It's true. I've seen you in a thousand plays. Read you in as many books. When I've heard beautiful music, I've thought “she'd like that”. I've looked at flowers and known that one day I'd give them to you.

Katherine

Oh, stop, stop. You must listen to me. I'm not that woman. Perhaps I was once, but I'm not now. You see, you were wrong. You can't trust me.

Rudolph

¿Are you trying to tell me that someone whose name we both know and won’t mention sent you?

Katherine

What are you saying?

Rudolph

You see, I've known all along. I had Albert look you up the day you arrived.

Katherine

And it didn't make any difference?

Rudolph

It didn't make any difference. You see, I trust you. You came here to betray me and to betray my country. That is your mission, Countess Rishola. And yet I am so sure of your love that I will trust you with my life and, what is far more valuable, the life of my country.

Katherine

I will betray you.

Rudolph

If you do, you will betray yourself at the same time.

Katherine

Yes. Yes, I know.

Rudolph

So you shall know my secret. Even now as we sit here, there is a great network growing tighter around the foremost nations of the world. Treaties, pacts, alliances being formed against the man who sent you. Tonight, I will sign a pact that will set the wheels in motion to destroy him.

Katherine

Destroy him? No.

Rudolph

He's made a great many mistakes. The greatest of all was sending you here, Katherine.

Katherine

Why?

Rudolph

He knew I should love you. But he did not guess that you would fall in love with me.

Katherine

No. He didn't guess that.

Rudolph

Then you do see that you cannot betray him.

Katherine

If I betray you, I betray myself. If I betray him, I betray my country. My country is very dear to me.

Rudolph

Dearer than I?

Katherine

No. No, not dearer than you.

Rudolph

Then will you help me defeat him?

Katherine

Help you? Defeat him?

Rudolph

By telling me his plans. That's the only way I can hope to defeat him. We can't both win. You'll see, Katherine.

Katherine

I'm beginning to see.

Rudolph

Then you will help me.

Katherine

By giving you any information I may possess concerning our plans?

Rudolph

Yes.

Katherine

You're very clever, aren't you? Oh, I can read you like a book now. You thought I was young and easily swayed. That you could make me love you. And I would throw over my country. My duty for you

Rudolph

That's not the way to look at it, Katherine

Katherine

You weren't so wise after all. Because you've lost, do you hear me? Lost. You guessed wrong in our little duel of wits. You forgot how close hate is to love

Rudolph

You don't know what you're saying, Katherine

Katherine

You never loved me, you knew that I loved you, and you used that!

Rudolph

Katherine, stop talking like a child. We're playing for countries now.

Katherine

Yes, we are, ¿aren't we? This is a gun in my hand, Rudolph. I'd advise you to be careful what you say.

Rudolph

Well, rather melodramatic, aren't you? Tell me, will I be the seventh notch on the gun or the eighth? ¿Do you mind if I smoke?

Katherine

Smoke?

Rudolph

I always smoke at the theater. Somehow it enhances the performance.

Katherine

You can do anything you please, Rudolph. But you have very little time to do it in.

Rudolph

You mean you're actually going to kill me?

Katherine

I mean just that.

Rudolph

Well, go ahead.

Katherine

I'll do this my own way. Look, you already know my purpose in being here. Now you will either give me my information or I will kill you. You have until nine o'clock.

Rudolph

You won't do it. You can't pull the trigger. You can't pull it because you love me. It takes a very brave and a very cold woman to do that, Katherine. I don't think you can. Isn't that true? Isn't that why you're waiting?

Katherine

That's not true.

Rudolph

Or is it that you want to watch your victim? You want my heart to constrict with agony, my hands to shake. You want me to plead for my life so you can make a generous gesture and spare me. Sorry, Katherine, I don't seem to be in the mood for prayers tonight.

Katherine

You don't think I'll do it. That's why you're so brave. You don't think I'll do it. You wouldn't be so brave otherwise. You're a coward at heart. You lied to me. You deceived me.

Rudolph

You tried to deceive me.

Katherine

I'm tired of listening to you.

Rudolph

You gave me your heart, you know. You'd like me to hand it back whole again, but I won't. You live a long time yet, Katherine, an eternity without me. You will look into the faces of passers-by, hoping for something that will, for an instant, bring me back to you. You will find moonlit nights strangely empty, because when you call my name through them, there will be no answer. Always your heart will be aching for me, and your mind will give you the doubtful consolation that you did a brave thing.

Katherine

You dare to talk of bravery?

Rudolph

What else do we have to talk about, Katherine? For me, there will never be another woman but you. But for my heart, there is another love that must come before you. My country... You are so still. Your face is like ice. What are you thinking, Katherine?

Katherine

What does anything you can say matter? You betrayed me with words. What good are words when your heart is breaking? If I fail now, I should deserve to die. You tricked me into loving you.

Rudolph

Aren't you forgetting that you came here for the same purpose?

Katherine

I couldn't have betrayed you. I tried to tell you. You said you already knew, I was as honest as I knew how to be.

Rudolph

¿Do you think I wanted to love you, knowing where you came from and what your mission was? Don't you suppose that every hour we were together I was thinking she's just pretending?

Katherine

¡I wasn't! I loved you.

Rudolph

And I loved you so much I let you pretend, because you brought something to my days I couldn't stand the thought of losing. Listen to your heart, Katherine. Feel it pounding.

Katherine

Your time is up.

Rudolph

Then my last words. I love you, Katherine.

Katherine

You're determined to die with a lie on your lips?

...

Rudolph

I...love you, Katherine.

Katherine

Oh, God.

Rudolph

Albert...Albert.

Albert

Where are you, sir? I heard a shot.

Rudolph

Help me up. I'll be all right. Help me up.

Albert

Oh, I knew you should never have come here. I'll get a doctor.

Rudolph

No, no, no, no. No, it's too late.

Albert

I waited right by the door like you told me to, sir. The other woman went downstairs about ten minutes ago. Please let me get a doctor, sir.

Rudolph

No, no. I want you to send a message, though, at once. The usual destination.

Albert

Yes, sir.

Rudolph

Kolenkoff. The masquerade is over. X-32 reports that Countess Rishola is trustworthy and loyal. You may entrust in her care any documents. She will not betray you. Report case 255 closed. X-32. Conceal it as usual, Albert, in the silver pencil.

Albert

Please let me call her back. You must tell her the truth before it's too late.

Rudolph

Tell her the truth? Tell her the truth so that she will watch the stars through tears instead of following the one cold star that is her destiny? No, no, Albert. Let her think I never loved her. One day, she will follow a flag to the same fate as mine. We must leave her the strength for that hour.

...

Narrator

I am adventure. Today you have shared the adventure of masquerade with me. Next week I bring you Jungle Harvest, take you to the tropic paradise of Samburan to share the adventure of a gentle, peace-loving man suddenly forced to pit his wits against the sinister and the dangerous in order to save his own life and the life of the girl he loves. Until then, I am dangerously yours.